Our Times In Prophesy. No. 1.

BY JOHN CULP.

"This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and arms of silver, his belly and thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay,"—Dan. 2. 32, 33.

I purpose to write a few articles for the EVANGELIST on the subject of Our Times in Prophesy.

All times are and have been and will be under prophesy.

With it, few books of ancient and modern histories and with the aid of a few smart students and expositors of the past the common mind may be led right through the principal part of the mystery of prophesy.

After we have the principal events in prophesy described by authors and expositor and find an agreement between those of different faith we may rely on those things as being correct. But when we come to detailing things pertaining to prophesy in the past and those of the present and future, it should not only be a privilege, but a duty devolving upon each one to think and act and expound scripture for ourselves. This is what I purpose to do. I purpose for the basis of my remarks on our times in prophesy to take unprejudiced men—men of a different faith—authors and expositors of scriptures who have not only thoroughly studied the pages of ancient books, but have copiously quoted ancient and modern authors on the mysteries of prophesy. The works that I shall principally refer to will be *Barne's Notes on Daniel.* The author of this work is, I suppose, a Presbyterian in faith. The other work will be *Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelations.* The author of this work is an Adventist in faith.

EXPOSITION OF NEBUCHADNEZZER'S IMAGE. DAN. 2 : 31, 45.

The image of Nebuchadnezzer symbolized four Kingdoms—verses 38, 39, 40—The first Kingdom Daniel expounds himself and is the Babylonian Kingdom; for Nebuchednezzer was king in that Kingdom, and Daniel says in verse 38th, "Thou art this head of Gold." For the interpretation as to what the head of gold symbolized we have no need to refer either to history or expositor. But the question arises: what king was the second Kingdom that was symbolized by the breast and arms of silver? For this we must inquire of the informed in history. The author of the Notes on Daniel page 140 says: "The Kingdom here referred to was undoubtedly the Medo-Persian, established by Cyrus in the conquest of Babylon which continued through the reigns of his successors until it was conquered by Alexander the Great."

The author of Thoughts on Daniel, page 63, says: "The succeeding Kingdom, Medo-Persia, is the one which answers to the breast and arms of silver." Here we have two authors widely differing in their religious views who agree that the second Kingdom symbolized by Nebuchednezzer's image is the Medo-Persian Kingdom. Undoubtedly they consulted other authority in the formation of these conclusions. The value of such unprejudiced quotations are not easily estimated either pecuniarily or in the amount of knowledge they impart which makes them also very difficult to set aside.

The "third Kingdom of brass which shall bear rule over all the earth" verse 39 we must interpret by the same method. Hear our author's notes on Dan., page 143: "There can be no reasonable doubt that by this third Kingdom is denoted the empire founded by Alexander the Great— the Macedonian Empire. *It is known to all that he* overthrew the Persian Empire and established a Kingdom in the East embracing substantially the same territory which had been occupied by the Medo-Persian and Babylonian Empire."

Thoughts on Dan., page 66: "In the ever changing politicial kaleidoscope, Grecia (The Macedonian Empire referred to in the above quotation belonged to Grecia) now comes into the field of vision to be for a time the all-absorbing object of attention as the third, of what are called, the great universal Empires of the earth." Granted correct, for as it is stated in one of those quotations "that it is known to all that," Alexander overthrew the Persian Empire, this demonstrates it the third Kingdom.

"And the fourth Kingdom shall be strong as iron."—verse 40. This was symbolized by the legs and feet of the image which were of iron the feet having clay mixed with the iron. Upon this subject, Notes on Dan., page 147, says: "It was true however of the Roman power that it was so much superior to all its predecessors in power that it might well be represented by iron in comparison with brass silver and gold.

Thoughts on Dan., page 69, says: "On this point we have only to inquire what Kingdom did succeed Grecia in the Empire of the world? For the legs of iron denote the fourth Kingdom in the series. The testimony of history is full and explicit on this point. One Kingdom did this and one only, and that was Rome."

Upon the iron monarchy of Rome, here the disinterest historian, Mr. Gibbon, in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*: "The arms of the Republic sometimes vanquished in battle, always victorious in war, advanced with rapid steps to the Euphrates, the Danube, the Rhine and the ocean and the images of gold or silver or brass that might serve to represent their nations or their kings were successfully broken by the iron monarchy of Rome." Again he says: "The Empire of the Romans filled the whole world. And when that Empire fell into the hands of a single person the world became a sate and dreary prison for his enemies. To resist was fatal and it was impossible to fly." This is the manner in which the fourth Kingdom is spoken of by historians as well as the expositors on the fourth Kingdom.

I now dismiss our authors and look for the lessons which may be learned from the fourth Kingdom, and applicable to our times. The question arises, are we yet under the dominion of the fourth kingdom? It is evident we are if the stone has not yet smote the image upon his feet and then passed away like the wind would carry away the chaff of the summer threshing floors—verse 35.

The question then arises in a different form to determine whether we live under the fourth kingdom; vis, has the image been smitten upon the feet and been destroyed? If there are any lessons to be deducted from the prophesy under consideration to apply to our times, then we must first decide this question, for all depends on how we decide this question. Perhaps some might take the position that we are just now being gently and gradually transferred from under the dominion of the fourth kingdom, as chaff would gradually and gently be carried away by gentle breezes over the summer threshing floors.

Two responses might be made to this. 1. To smite and shatter to pieces and be swept away and no place be found for them, is rather a shock than a gradual or gentle work. 2. If we are now being gradually transferred from under the dominion of the fourth kingdom, we ought now begin to see the signs of the stone that smote "the image becoming a great mountain and filling the whole earth"—verse 35. Are we having those signs? We must not look at past events that would not be a fair test but we must look for those signs in our time right at the present.

With all of our Christian zeal and mighty number of conversions the world over it seems to me it would be a great task to sustain the view that we are now being transferred from under the dominion of the fourth kingdom and that righteousness and the peaceful kingdom of saints which is never to be destroyed (verse 44) is filling the whole earth.

Look at the riots, not only in this country, but in other countries; the incendiary charges, murders, thefts, suicides, briberies in our political campaigns. The threatening of the order of the Knights of Labor claiming to be starving for the want of a just and equitable distribution of the wealth of the land. Women learned to compound and carry dynamite, little boys as well as the masses of humanity in possession and even secretly carrying shooting irons, great parades in some of our cities under red flags and the boycotting and striking which actually are carrying serious consternations, as well as evil forbodings to the welfare of the human family. But this is not all that would have to be combated to prove that we are passing into the peaceful age of the saints, reign upon earth. Statistics show that, although we would add together Protestants numbering 166 millions, Greek Catholics 80 millions, Roman Catholics 290 millions, Jews 8 millions, Mohommedans 170 millions, it would if the population of the world as estimated is 1,424,000,000 still leave considerable more than one-half, nearly two-thirds, of the population of the globe in heathenism. The picture is too dark to talk about applying to the idea that the stone cut out of the mountain has or is smiting the image on the feet, and has or is now filling the whole earth. It is a position that would seem foolish to undertake to sustain.

On the other hand the application may readily be made and sustained by prophesy that we are living under the fourth kingdom.

According to prophesy we do not look either for a pure Roman Catholic church or government, but the kingdom is to be divided—verse 41. And it is to be partly strong as the Roman Empire was and then again brittle and divide into parts. verse 42. And, again, they are to scatter themselves among other people, and at last not stand together in a common cause at all. verse 43. This is about the condition that we find the fourth kingdom in at present. And the changable positions in these instances is nothing uncommon in the history of the Roman Empire. It always suited itself to hold the sway over the masses of humanity.

Pilate washed his hands and declared his innocence of the blood of Christ; but for the common plea, "for peace sake," and to please the multitude the Lord was delivered up to be crucified. For a time after the death of the Apostles, Christians enjoyed peace under the government of the fourth kingdom; but when the Christians began to be numerous it became necessary for the peace of the kingdom to behead a few of the prominent Chrisians, afterwards it became necessary to violently persecute them for disturbing the peace of the Empire and assailing Paganism, the popular religion of the Empire. But it was all to no avail: Christianity became so popular that it was evident that it would take the kingdom, so for "peace sake" and to hold the sway over the majority the kingdom begins to embrace Christianity, and after the darkest crimes and ages are passed over under papal rule, the kingdom is invaded by the Protestants and he receives a deadly wound; but by the plaster of *'peace sake*, it has been healed, and the fourth kingdom has about solved itself into Protestantism. There are plenty of instances that might here be cited to prove that our times are fulfilling prophesy in this respect, but these things will likely be noticed in future, articles.

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"Even So Them That Sleep In Jesus."

Sometimes I believe the little ones say the best things after all. I know a little family who are heart-broken and sad this Saturday night. There were three last Saturday; but today only two are left. The tie that bound them more closely than that which the clergyman drew, has lately been loosened; and the light of their countenances went out with the red winter sun only the other night. The father is a railroad man, whose duties call him away from home nearly three-fourths of the time. It was his habit, whenever he was about to start for home, to telegraph to his wife, apprising her of the fact. In these telegrams he never failed to mention the name of the little four-year-old; and the dispatches usually ran as follows:—"Tell Arthur I shall sleep with him to-night." The baby boy was very proud of these telegrams, which his mother would read over to him, and he considered the "teledraf" a great institution. The other night, when the fever had done its work, and the mother was sobbing out her anguish, the little one turned calmly in his bed, and said—"Don't ky, mamma; I s'all s'eep wiv Dod, 'oo know. Send Dod a teledraf, and tell Him I s'all s'eep wiv Him to-night." But the message went straight up there without the clicking of wires or the rustle of wings.—SEL.